AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1-2. (cancelled)

3. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~1~~17, wherein the point of impact of said liquid etchant stream is moved across the surface of the substrate in a time sequence.

4. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~1~~17, wherein said liquid etchant is dispensed at a volume flow of at least 0.05 l/min.

5. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~1~~17, wherein said substrate is rotated while exposed to said liquid etchant.

6-7. (cancelled)

8. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~1~~17, wherein the second material is silicon dioxide and the liquid etchant comprises fluoride ions.

9-10. (cancelled)

11. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~1~~17, wherein said liquid etchant is selected from the group consisting of:

a solution comprising fluoride ions and an additive for lowering dielectric constant of said solution,

an acidic aqueous solution comprising fluoride ions; and

an acidic aqueous solution comprising fluoride ions and an additive for lowering dielectric number.

12. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein said liquid etchant comprises an analytical concentration of less than 0.01 mol/l of fluoride ions, wherein said analytical concentration is calculated as F^-.

13. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~1~~17, wherein said liquid etchant comprises fluoride ions and has a pH less than 3.

14. (previously presented) The method of claim 2, wherein the liquid etchant is dispensed at a volume flow of at least 0.5 1/min.

15. (previously presented) The method of claim 11, wherein the additive for lowering dielectric number, in the acidic aqueous solution comprising fluoride ions, is an alcohol.

16. (cancelled)

17. (previously presented) A method of selective etching comprising:

providing a first material on a substrate, wherein said first material is HfO_2 or ZrO_2, and said first material is pretreated with an energetic particle bombardment;

providing a second material on the substrate; and

selectively etching said first material with a selectivity of at least 2:1 towards said second material by dispensing a liquid etchant onto the substrate surface and generating a flow having a mean velocity v parallel to the surface of the substrate of at least 0.1 m/s,

wherein said liquid etchant is dispensed in a continuous flow as a free beam or as a liquid stream onto the substrate and spreads over the surface of the substrate.